NOAA Managing Diversity

Organizational Improvement and
Managing Diversity
Through Employee Empowerment

an Information Briefing

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If you treat employees as if they make a difference to the organization, they will make a difference to the organization.

Outline

- Purpose

- Issue

- Challenges

- Background & Discussion

- Alternatives

- Managing Diversity

Awareness, Understanding, Action

If you treat employees as if they make a difference to the organization, they will make a difference to the organization.

Purpose

- Describe Managing Diversity

- Present to managers the results of SFA '02

- SFA can help mid-level managers

- Identify SFA key successes

- Highlight SFA challenges

Awareness, Understanding, Action

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Purpose

Survey, Feedback, Action (SFA) is a synergistic process whereby all NOAA employees, at the same time, using the same process, are engaged in experiential learning activities designed to promote and enhance:

» Inclusion
» Open two-way communication
» Teamwork
» Productivity and Creativity
» Organizational effectiveness and flexibility to change
» Transition from paternalism to partnership

This is accomplished through a partnership between management and employees to positively impact the NOAA diversity climate and provide a bridge between our current state and future state (espoused values). This partnership contributes to our ability to select and retain the best and brightest – and fully utilize our current workforce.

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Issue

- **Issue:**
  - Results of the '02 SFA
  - How NOAA can better manage diversity
  - Your role as mid-level managers

- **Involved parties:** employees, managers, NOAA leadership and internal and external customers

- **Desired outcome:**
  - Provide tools and resources to help you play a role in creating a team environment at NOAA
  - Motivate and help you to better manage diversity in your organization

- **Why important to NOAA's mid-level managers:** Without buy-in of NOAA's mid-level managers through role modeling and accountability the initiative cannot realize its positive potential for NOAA and its employees.

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Background & Discussion

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NOAA Diversity Vision Statement

NOAA is committed to a workplace in which all people are respected as individuals and are valued for their contributions to accomplishing NOAA's mission. We will foster an inclusive, supportive, open, challenging and innovative work environment to enable employees to be positive, creative and reach their full potential in support of NOAA's mission.

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Initiative Consists Of

- Education (Advocacy) – Experiential learning

- Facilitation

- Teambuilding, conflict resolution, diversity briefings

- Work life Center and initiatives

- Understanding Differences Interventions – customized Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Workshops and Feedback sessions; MBTI for children and adult family members, and others

- Influencing Change: Leave Bank approval

- Link to strategic initiatives

- Linking to Peter Senge's five disciplines
    - Shared Vision
    - Personal Mastery
    - Team Learning
    - Mental Models
    - Systems Thinking

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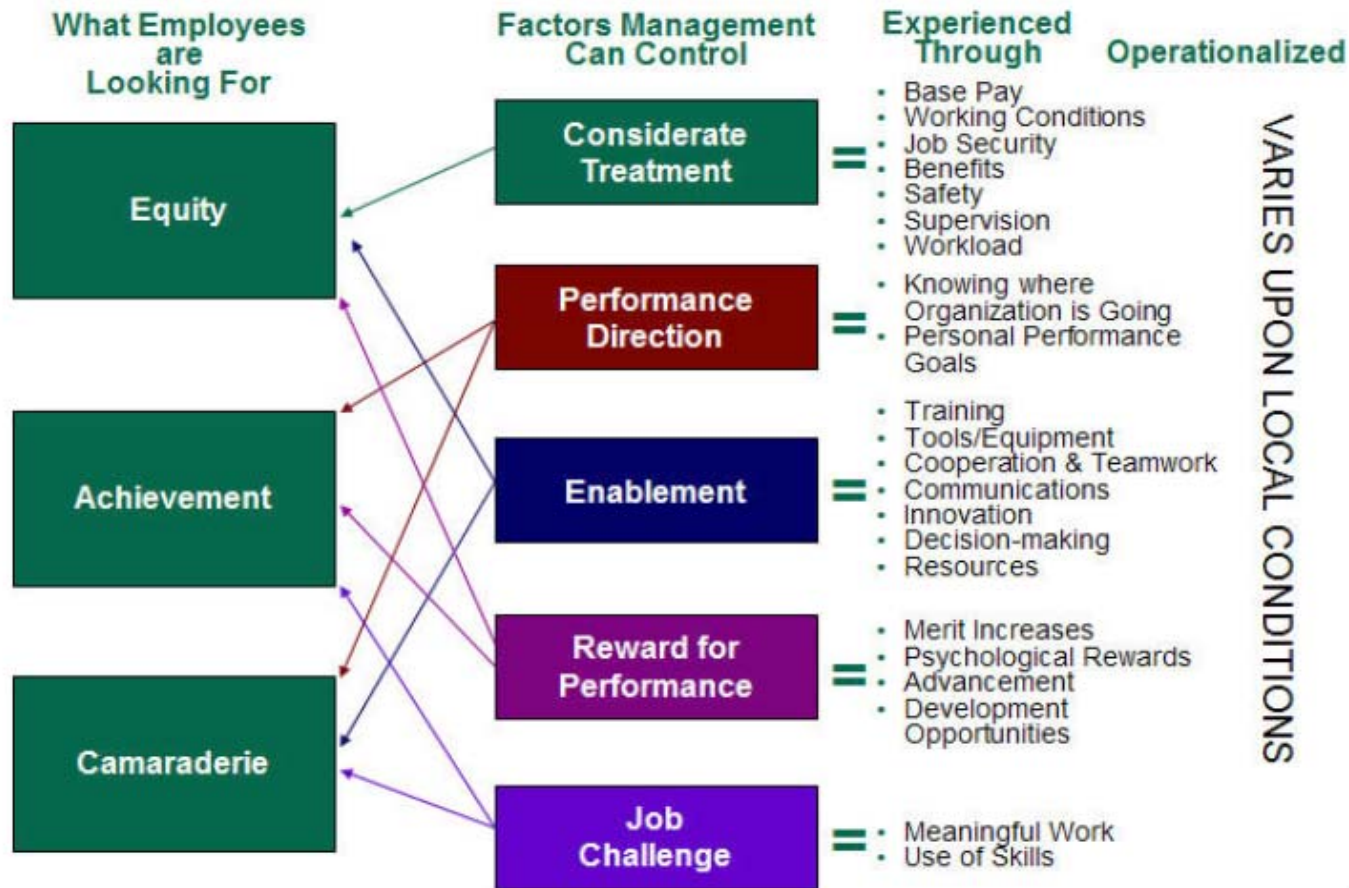
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What is Organizational Culture?

- Unwritten, unofficial, "in the trenches" ways that things get done at NOAA

- Influences the relationships between people and teams

- Can make or break a team, a project, even an entire organization

- Evolves as a function of the behaviors, values and beliefs of organizational members

NOAA's Managing Diversity strategy is focused on creating an inclusive organizational culture where all employees can reach their full potential in support of NOAA's mission.

SFA is ONE tool that we use to help assess the organizational culture and analyze the gap between the current and desired state.

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What Is NOAA's Organizational Culture?

In 2001 the NOAA Diversity Council conducted a cultural audit (1998 survey data, 76 leadership interviews; 16 focus groups; NOAA/DOC reports and documents, and complaint, grievance and award data). The audit identified three interdependent cultural roots (values) that in all likelihood find their origins in the historical development of NOAA:

- **Dedication to Mission (Strategic Root -** provides the competitive advantage and defines the relationship between the organization and its external environment)**:**

   - **We are mission focused**

   - **We protect the Earth's Most valuable resources**

   - **We provide lifesaving information**

   - **Scientific or technical expertise are preferred**

- **Command and Control (paternalism/militaristic) (Governance Root -** drives internal management structure and who and how decisions are made)

   - **Respect for Authority**

   - **Assimilation**

- **Individual Effort (Operational Root -** guides employees in how to act in day to day activities**)**

   - **We are colleagues**

   - **Line/Field Offices do the Work**

   - **We achieve results through science**

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NOAA Diversity Wheel: What Makes up NOAA's Organizational Culture

Employee feedback on diversity dimensions that serve as barriers in NOAA

ORGANIZATIONAL

Clerical/Professional
Real Work/People Work
Weather Business/Everyone Else
Administrative/Scientific
Technical/Professional
Admin. Staff/Everyone Else
Funding Training Resources
Wage Grade/GS
Contractor/Permanent
Political/Non-Political
Contract/C.S. (Gov't) Employees
GS/Payband/WG
Corps/Civilian
Producer/Non-Producer
Scientist/Non-Scientist
Weather/Weather

CULTURAL

Military/Non-Military
Scientist/Technician
Previous Employment Outside NOAA
Education: Degree/Non-Degree Scientific/Tech. Degree
Mgt./Non-Mgt.
Meterology/Oceanography
Program/Services
Club Member: (Elks/Ducks)
Marital Status
Parental Status
Age Bias: Meterologist/Hydrologist/Oceanographer/Climatologist
Different Missions
CORE
Ph.D/Non-Ph.D
Field of Degree
Use of Leave
Region/Region
Gender
Religion
Ethnicity
Team Player: (Gender & Race)
Science Research/ Science Money/ Science Management
Language Thinking
Penn St./ U of Wash.
Sexual Orientation
Style
Race
Age
Outside Hobbies: Penn St./Okla. U
Sandwich Generation: Elder & Children
Geographic Location
Union/Non-Union Demo Project/ Non-Demo Project
Line Offices: Wet/Dry
Isolation - Geographic Time Zone-Date Line
Culture Sensitivity (Pacific Region)
Line/Staff
Gender/Race/Ethnic components to certain occupations
Cost of Living
NOAA/Commerce
Research Scientist/ Operational Scientist
Physical Appearance
Not Latest Technology
Basic Research/ Applied Research
Administration/ Operations
Published/ Non-Published
State Employee/ Federal Employee
Policy/Regulations
Shift Work
Public/Private
Lack of Electronic Communication
Ship/Land
Field/HQ
Labs/Field

Awareness, Understanding, Action

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SFA Facts

- Over 70% of employees took the survey in 1998 and 63% of the workgroups held feedback action planning meetings

- 76% of NOAA employees used SFA 2002 as an opportunity to voice opinions and anticipate action regarding their worklife

- Over 1,000 workgroups (90% of the total number of workgroups in NOAA) participated in the facilitated feedback action planning meetings in 2002

- NOAA employees had a lot of suggestions:
    - Over 6509 write in comments were received
    - 888 action plans have been input into action tracker
    - 5700 actions were recommended for improvement
    - 128 issues were elevated within the line offices
    - 85 of these issues were elevated to NFA and centered on recruitment, the work environment, performance systems, rewards and recognition, and training and development

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SFA Facts

- Hundreds of NOAA employees took advantage of the offering of Myers Briggs Type Indicator opening doors to how workgroup members interact with one another and receive and process information – thousands of employees have taken advantage of this to date

- Over 200 employees trained as SFA Facilitators – skills that transcend the SFA environment and impact all areas of their work.

- NWS Tornado Study has linked employee satisfaction with work environment AND management accountability to effective change (improved results from 98 to 02)

- The Office of Diversity has received positive feedback from employees and SFA Facilitators about the benefit of the entire SFA process

- Employees spoke, now will we fulfill our commitment to action?

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SFA… What's In It For You?

SFA can help mid-level managers by:

- Improving communication with employees
- Providing a vehicle for constructive use of feedback
- Offering a chance to increase credibility
- Providing a basis for building agreements
- Supporting mission accomplishment
- Providing useful data for improving products and services

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RESULTS
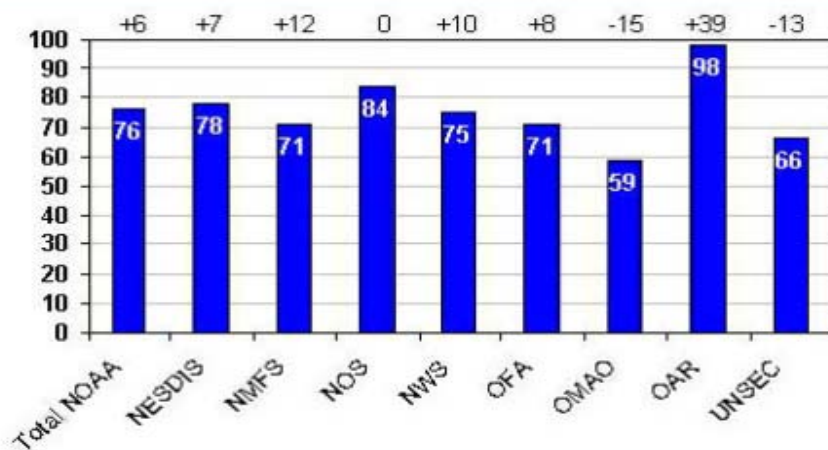
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SFA 02 Highlights

Survey Dimensions With High Favorability

Teamwork	73%
Customer Focus	70%
Work Environment	69%
Supervision	68%
Innovation	65%

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NOAA Favorability Results for 1998 and 2002
Studies show there is a correlation between employee satisfaction and productivity

EMPLOYEE VIEWS	1998	2002
FAVORABLE VIEW OF LEADERSHIP	39%	50%
FAVORABLE VIEW OF SUPERVISION	62%	68%
FAVORABLE VIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICE	49%	70%
FAVORABLE VIEW OF TEAM WORK	63%	73%
FAVORABLE VIEW OF FAIRNESS	53%	60%

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Results
1998 NOAA-wide
Best Practices

- *Access NOAA* (in response to NOAA's Bottom 10)

- Employee and Team Member of the Month Awards

- Line and Staff office newsletters

- Enhanced line office websites for improving communication

- Best Practices Award

- Improvement meetings held concurrently throughout the organization designed to improve productivity through communication, understanding differences and empowerment—many employee groups met on issues of concern **for the very first time**

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Results: NWS Promising Practices

- Employees visiting neighboring offices to learn and share best practices

- One office is providing leadership training for all employees, especially those responsible for shift duties

- One office is recognizing outstanding individuals by staff vote and team recognition is presented by the MIC

- One office divided major opportunities for improvement into categories, assigned teams and provided them with a budget to make improvements

- NWS launched "Ask Why"

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Results: NMAO Promising Practices

- Extended the internal Temporary Assignment Program to wage marines and these employees are eligible for training opportunities outside their current areas

- Established the Director's weekly newsletter and annual report to employees outlining key issues including organizational success stories

- Took steps to better define its medical clearance policies and has implemented a wellness program for maritime employees.

- Improved web communications to ensure accessibility for those at sea

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Results: OAR Promising Practices

- Established regular meeting times for problem solving

- Developing a mentoring program pairing up experienced scientists with younger scientists

- Developing a special recognition for employees related to sea duty

- Holding more open discussions to encourage group participation in decision making

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Results: NESDIS Promising Practices

- Establishing new mechanisms for recognizing outstanding performance on special projects

- Initiating planned deployments to increase operational crew interactions and familiarity with backup control centers

- Holding monthly meetings with representatives from two offices to share common concerns, integration plans and schedule and resource conflicts

- Worked with HR staff to impleemt a rolling COOL vacancy which is always open for permanent employment

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Results: NMFS
Promising Practices

- Established *Fish News,* an automated, e-mail based employee newsletter

- Created a NMFS Trainign Task Force/Council which consists of management, secretaries, etc.

- Implementing Q&A sessions for employees with concerns about hiring and promotion practices

- Hired a specialist to examine chairs, computers, screens, etc. and replacing equipment as needed.

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Results: NOS
Promising Practices

- The NOS Business Operating Council reviewing SFA items and initiating improvements

- Established a weekly email from the NOS AA to all employees

- Hosting monthly "Juicers", breakfast networking opportunity for managers and employees

- One office established the Employee Action Council (EAC) to help employees successfully anticipate and respond to challenges and empower them to make improvements in their work environment

- DAA to develop and distribute "best corporate practices" for establishing transparency in decision making for promotions, special projects and awards

- Issue the NOS Career Enhancement Plan (CEP) to all employee.

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Results: UNSEC Promising Practices

•One GC Office will identify a singel attorney or regional attorney in each project, court case, etc. to which everyone will direct inquiries to ensure consistent advice

•To improve office structure and morale, GC will hold orientation and training for new staff; re-establish staff meetings on a regular basis; improve career development opportunities; maintain twice-yearly award cycle; and, increase social functions of the office

•Hold brown bag lunches to discuss problems and solutions

RESULTS
Data Analysis

Common Issues---Write-ins, Focus Groups, Bottom 10, Action Plans and Elevated Issues

- Communication
- Human Resource Systems: Recruitment, Training, Performance, Advancement Opportunities, Awards and Recognition,
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Employee Involvement
- Fairness and Treatment of Others

- *Common SFA Issues not included in the PRT: EEO, Communication, Fairness and Treatment of Others and Employee Involvement*

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CHALLENGES

- Maximizing the potential of SFA in organizational improvement, learning and inclusion
- Addressing action plans, on-line focus group recommendations, write-ins, bottom ten key opportunities and elevated issues in a visible long lasting manner: continuous process of improvement
- Management accountability for making improvements as a result of SFA
- Creating an inclusive work environment
- Using SFA data to improve products & services
- Maintaining the trust and confidence of our employees by following through our commitment of SFA

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Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE 1...THE STATUS QUO:

- Continue with SFA administration every two-years

- No/Little management accountability for change

- SFA not linked to NOAA business operations

- Employee trust in SFA as a process for improving our culture is diminished

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Alternatives

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE...BUILDING ACCOUNTABILITY & LINKING SFA TO PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Treat SFA as an on-going process for continuous improvement
- Hold management accountable for change; integrate SFA into managers' performance plan expectations
- Link SFA to all business operations as a tool for change
- Focus on communicating positive outcomes from SFA as steps towards improving our organizational culture and quality of worklife

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How can you better manage diversity in your office?

- Treat SFA as a continuous improvement process

- Understand the long term nature of cultural and behavioral change

- Identify barriers in systems, policies and practices

- Create an inclusive and flexible work environment

- Fulfill your commitment to employees: address action plans and follow-up on elevated issues

- Integrate SFA into other initiatives using the survey data as a baseline for measuring future improvements

- Develop competency to manage diversity—be an advocate for change and inclusion and challenge the status quo

- Educate your team on the importance of managing diversity and creating an inclusive work environment

- Consider the use of 360 degree feedback

- Model appropriate managing diversity behaviors

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